

CLAIMS

1. A method of training a quality assessment tool comprising the steps of
 - 5 dividing a database comprising a plurality of samples, each with an associated mean opinion score into a plurality of distortion sets of samples according to a distortion criterion; and
 - training a distortion specific assessment handler for
 - 10 each distortion set, such that a fit between a distortion specific quality measure generated from
 - a distortion specific plurality of parameters for a sample and
 - the mean opinion score associated with said
 - 15 sampleis optimised.
2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of
 - 20 training the quality assessment tool, such that a fit between a quality measure generated from
 - a non-distortion specific plurality of parameters together with a distortion specific quality measure for a sample, and
 - 25 the mean opinion score associated with said sample,is optimised.
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 in which the samples represent speech transmitted over a
- 30 telecommunications network, and in which the quality

measure is representative of the quality of the speech perceived by an average user.

4. A method of assessing speech quality in a
5 telecommunications network comprising the steps of
determining a dominant distortion type for a sample;
combining a plurality of parameters specific to said
dominant distortion type to provide a distortion specific
quality measure for each sample; and
10 generating a quality measure in dependence upon the
distortion specific quality measure.

5. A method according to claim 4 in which the generating
step comprises the sub step of
15 combining a non-distortion specific plurality of
parameters with said distortion specific quality measure
to provide said quality measure.

6. A method according to claim 4 or claim 5 in which the
20 samples represent speech transmitted over a
telecommunications network, and in which the quality
measure is representative of the quality of the speech
perceived by an average user.

25 7. A computer readable medium carrying a computer
program for implementing the method according to any one
of claims 1 to 6.

8. A computer program for implementing the method
30 according to any one of claims 1 to 6.

9. An apparatus for assessing speech quality in a telecommunications network comprising
- 5 means for determining a dominant distortion type for a sample;
- means for combining a distortion specific plurality of parameters to provide a distortion specific quality measure for each sample; and
- 10 means for generating a quality measure in dependence upon the distortion specific quality measure.
10. An apparatus according to claim 9, in which
- the generating means comprises means for combining a non-distortion specific plurality of parameters with said distortion specific quality measure to provide said quality measure.
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11. An apparatus for training a quality assessment tool comprising
- 20 means for dividing a database comprising a plurality of samples, each with an associated mean opinion score into a plurality of distortion sets of samples according to a distortion criterion; and
- means for training a distortion specific assessment handler for each distortion set, such that a fit between a distortion specific quality measure generated from
- 25 a distortion specific plurality of parameters for a sample and the mean opinion score associated with said sample
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is optimised.

12. An apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising

5 means for training the quality assessment tool, such that a fit between a quality measure generated from a non-distortion specific plurality of parameters together with a distortion specific quality measure for a sample, and
10 the mean opinion score associated with said sample, is optimised.

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